

State of Arkansas
93rd General Assembly
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As Engrossed: H2/24/21 S3/3/21

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1215

By: Representative Bentley

By: Senator K. Hammer

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO GRANT FULL PRACTICE AUTHORITY TO CERTIFIED
NURSE MIDWIVES; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO GRANT FULL PRACTICE AUTHORITY TO
CERTIFIED NURSE MIDWIVES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 17-87-302(a)(3), concerning the qualifications to be licensed as an advanced practice registered nurse, is amended to read as follows:

(3) Certified Nurse Midwife. To qualify as a certified nurse midwife, an applicant shall:

(A) Hold current certification by a national certifying body recognized by the board in the advanced practice registered nurse role and population foci appropriate to educational preparation; and

(B) Have ~~an agreement with a consulting physician if providing intrapartum care~~ full practice authority under § 17-87-314; or

SECTION 2. Arkansas Code Title 17, Chapter 87, Subchapter 3, is amended to add an additional section to read as follows:

17-87-314. Full practice authority for certified nurse midwives - Definition.

(a)(1) The General Assembly finds that:

(A)(i) Certified nurse midwives are advanced practice



registered nurses who are national certified after completing post-graduate specialty education in an accredited program.

(ii) The scope of nurse midwifery includes care of gynecological and family planning services, preconception care, care during pregnancy, childbirth and postpartum care, care of a normal newborn during the first twenty-eight (28) days of life, and treatment of male partners for sexually transmitted infections;

(B) When women and infants do not have access to routine, quality health care, there is an increased risk of maternal and infant mortality and morbidity, including infant mortality and morbidity resulting from low birth weight and preterm birth;

(C) Certified nurse midwives are often underutilized in helping provide maternity, prenatal, postnatal, intrapartum, and reproductive healthcare services in this state;

(D) In 2018, less than one percent (1%) of births in Arkansas were attended by a certified nurse midwife;

(E) Integrating certified nurse midwives into maternity care could help improve women's access to healthcare providers and quality of care;

(F) Midwifery-led models of care have been proven to improve maternal and infant outcomes for socially at-risk communities and achieve good maternal and infant outcomes on a large scale; and

(G) To increase healthcare provider choices for women and access to maternity, prenatal, postnatal, intrapartum, and reproductive healthcare services, the certified nurse midwives of this state should be granted full authority to practice to the extent of their education, clinical training, and certification.

(2) It is the intent of the General Assembly to grant certified nurse midwives full practice authority.

(b) As used in this section, "full practice authority" means the authority of a healthcare professional to:

(1) Evaluate patients;

(2) Diagnose medical conditions;

(3) Order and interpret diagnostic tests;

(4) Initiate and manage treatment and care plans, including appropriate comanagement or transfer of high-risk patients to other

healthcare professionals as needed; and

(5) Prescribe and administer drugs listed in Schedules III – V without a collaborative practice agreement or supervision of another healthcare professional when performing healthcare services.

(c)(1) A certified nurse midwife with full practice authority is not subject to the collaborative practice agreement requirements in § 17-87-310 if providing prescriptions of medications that are in Schedules III – V.

(2) A collaborative practice agreement under § 17-87-310 is required to provide prescriptions of medications that are in Schedule II.

(d) For a delivery outside of an accredited facility, the certified nurse midwife shall identify a licensed physician or facility, or both, with which an arrangement has been made for referral and consultation in the event of a medical complication.

(e) This section does not authorize a certified nurse midwife to perform an abortion or provide abortion counseling or abortion referrals.

/s/Bentley

APPROVED: 4/7/21